



## MELINDA KATZ DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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A Message from District Attorney

### MELINDA KATZ

#### HOME INVADERS SENTENCED TO PRISON

We recently announced that four defendants pleaded guilty in connection with a violent home invasion in August 2024.

Three of the men broke into the Douglaston home brandishing a gun, crowbar and hammer. The fourth man was the getaway driver. The assailants demanded money and threatened a family that included a 1-year-old and an elderly couple.

If not for the bravery of a young mother, who escaped with her baby through a bathroom window after the assailants dragged her husband from their bedroom, they might have succeeded. The woman called the police who responded and apprehended the defendants.

Two of the men, who are brothers, were each sentenced to 15 years in prison. The third defendant was ordered to serve 12 years, and the fourth man faces 17 years incarceration when he is sentenced.

Our thoughts are with the victims as they continue to recover from this deeply traumatizing incident.

In Friendship,

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#### TWO SEPARATE GANG TAKEDOWNS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz recently announced two gang takedowns to curtail summer violence.

Twenty-two reputed members of Blitz Gang 4, commonly referred to as BG4, were variously charged in a 97-count indictment with attempted murder, weapons possession, conspiracy and other crimes.

This indictment was the result of a long-term investigation into multiple shootings in Southeast Queens. These instances of violence stemmed from gang members fighting over territory with rival Floss Money Ballers.

According to the investigation, the defendants were responsible for the following:

- 11 shootings
- One stabbing
- Three injuries including to a man who is now paralyzed
- Utilizing 17 different firearms

"As alleged, the wanton violence between members of Blitz Gang 4 and Floss Money Ballers has terrorized Southeast Queens communities for the past two years and put countless innocent residents at risk," DA Katz said. "This takedown marks the next phase in our relentless campaign to dismantle violent criminal enterprises and rid our neighborhoods of the scourge of gun and gang violence.

In the second recent gang takedown, five defendants were charged in a 27-count indictment for their roles in a shooting spree in the Rockaways

that resulted in two people being injured in March and April.

"These reputed gang members are allegedly responsible for multiple shootings in the Arverne and Edgemere neighborhoods of the Rockaways. Two people – including an innocent person walking on the street – were shot as these individuals sprayed bullets throughout the area in an attempt to gain dominance over that area," DA Katz said.

Four of the defendants are accused of being members of the Ocean Village Jets gang and were allegedly linked to shootings in March and April. A pedestrian was struck in the foot by a bullet intended for a rival gang member during one of those shootings. The second victim was shot in the chest after being confronted in a building's stairwell for money. The fifth defendant was a reputed member of the rival 70G Apes gang and was linked to a shooting on March 11.



## HOPE HOUSE RIBBON CUTTING IN THE BRONX



DA Katz joined fellow district attorneys and city dignitaries for a ribbon cutting ceremony at Hope House on Crotona Park in the Bronx.

Hope House is a much-needed alternative to incarceration program that is administered by the Greenburger Center for Justice. The facility will provide transformative care in a residential setting to offenders with serious mental health issues.

"Sometimes the best course of action is not incarceration. Sometimes the better avenue for justice is to assess a defendant's mental health and help them to become contributing members of society, rather than an individual who cycles through the criminal justice system," DA Katz said. "Hope House is a space for these individuals who would otherwise have nowhere else to go."

Hope House will have an on-site treatment program and will have residential and security staff on duty around the clock. Admission will be voluntary with advice of counsel and the consent of the Court.

The DA attended the groundbreaking for Hope House in November 2023 and was honored to be present for the completion of the project.

"I created the Rehabilitation Programs and Restorative Services Bureau within my office to help address the real need for mental healthcare for offenders. Since its creation, this bureau has seen a significant increase in staffing, which has given us the ability to identify cases that qualify for services such as those that Hope House will be offering," DA Katz said.



## CASES OF INTEREST

Defendant **Richard Dixon**, 35, was sentenced to 55 years to life in prison for gunning down his accomplice when the two men were aiming to kill rivals in June 2022 in Ozone Park. The Laurelton man was aiming for his target when he fired a military-grade assault weapon in a public parking lot but missed and struck his 38-year-old collaborator instead.

A jury found the defendant, pictured right, guilty of murder in the second degree, attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree.

In a separate case, former FDNY firefighter **Michael Pena** was sentenced to four to 12 years in prison for killing 23-year-old Justin Diaz, an employee at LaGuardia Airport who was on his way to work when the defendant slammed into the victim's vehicle.



The 29-year-old defendant was driving while intoxicated, speeding and ran a steady red light when he T-boned the victim at 4:15 a.m. on February 26, 2025. Pena pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the second degree and vehicular manslaughter.

## QDA MOBILE OFFICE COMPLETES VISITS TO ALL QUEENS LIBRARIES

The QDA Mobile Office made its first appearance at a borough library in January 2024 and on July 9 completed 63 visits in its first round of stops.

The goal is to reach residents where they live and play to answer questions and provide information about services and resources

available through the DA's office.

Office staffers assisted more than 1,700 people answering inquiries about domestic violence, rental issues, squatters, deed theft, traffic violence and more.

Branches that were closed for renovation will receive a visit when they reopen.



## SUMMER LEADERSHIP TEEN INTERNS

The DA welcomed 33 teenagers who are part of the QDA Summer Leadership Internship Program.

For six weeks the high school students will learn about opportunities in law enforcement as

well as career development.

The teens will enhance their workplace skills through hands-on activities. They will learn how to perfect a resume and other techniques for future success.

